

# U.S. Census Bureau News

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## Americans with Disabilities Act: July 26

On this day in 1990, President George H. W. Bush signed into law the Americans with Disabilities Act, guaranteeing equal opportunity for people with disabilities in public accommodations, commercial facilities, employment, transportation, state and local government services and telecommunications.

### Population Distribution

#### **51.2 million**

Number of people who have some level of disability. They represent 18 percent of the population.

#### **32.5 million**

Number of people with a severe disability. They represent 12 percent of the population.

#### **11%**

Percentage of children ages 6 to 14 who have a disability. This amounts to 4 million children.

#### **72%**

Percentage of people 80 and older with disabilities, the highest of any age group.

#### **20%**

Percentage of females with a disability, higher than the 17 percent of males. On the other hand, among children under 15, boys were more likely than girls to have a disability (11 percent versus 6 percent).

### Using or Needing Assistance

#### **10.7 million**

Number of people age 6 and older who need personal assistance with one or more activities of daily living (such as taking a bath or shower) or instrumental activities of daily living (such as using the telephone). This group amounts to 4 percent of people in this age category.

## **2.7 million**

Number of people age 15 and older who use a wheelchair. Another 9.1 million use an ambulatory aid such as a cane, crutches or walker.

### **Specific Disabilities**

## **1.8 million**

Number of people age 15 and older who report being unable to see.

## **1 million**

Number of people age 15 and older who report being unable to hear.

## **2.6 million**

Number of people age 15 and older who have some difficulty having their speech understood by others. Of this number, 610,000 were unable to have their speech understood at all.

## **14.3 million**

Number of people with limitations in cognitive functioning or a mental or emotional illness that interferes with their daily activities. This includes those with Alzheimer's disease, depression and mental retardation. This group comprises 6 percent of the population.

### **On the Job**

## **11.8 million**

Number of 16- to 64-year-olds who reported the presence of a medical condition that makes it difficult to find a job or remain employed. They comprise 6 percent of the population.

## **56%**

Percentage of people ages 21 to 64 having some type of disability and also employed in the last year. The rate ranged from 82 percent of those with a nonsevere disability to 43 percent with a severe disability. For those without a disability, the rate is 88 percent.

## **44%**

Percentage of people with a nonsevere disability who work full time, year-round. This compares to 53 percent without a disability and 13 percent with a severe disability.

### **Perceived Health Status**

## **33%**

Percentage of people ages 25 to 64 who have a nonsevere disability and report their health as being "very good" or "excellent." This compares with 13 percent of those with a severe disability and 73 percent of those without a disability.

### **Income and Poverty**

## **\$22,000**

Median earnings for people with a nonsevere disability. This compares to \$25,000 for those with no disability and \$12,800 for those with a severe disability.

## **18%**

Percentage of people with a nonsevere disability and household incomes of \$80,000 or more. By comparison, 26 percent of people without a disability had household incomes of \$80,000 or more with the same being true of 9 percent of those with a severe one.

## **11%**

The poverty rate for people ages 25 to 64 with a nonsevere disability. This compares to 26 percent for those with a severe disability and 8 percent of those without a disability.

## **Living Arrangements**

### **60%**

Percentage of people ages 25 to 64 with a nonsevere disability who live in married-couple families. The corresponding rates are 68 percent for those without disabilities and 50 percent for people with severe disabilities.

### **23%**

Percentage of people with a nonsevere disability who live alone or with nonrelatives. This compares with 28 percent of those with a severe disability and 19 percent without a disability.

## **Education**

### **33%**

The percentage of people ages 25 to 64 who had a nonsevere disability and were college graduates. This compares with 43 percent with no disability and 22 percent with a severe disability.

## **Plugged In**

### **36% and 29%**

Percentages of people ages 15 to 64 with a severe disability who use a computer and the Internet at home, respectively. The respective figures for those without a disability are 61 percent and 51 percent.

## **Serving Our Nation**

### **2.6 million**

Number of veterans who received compensation for service-related disabilities as of 2004. Of these vets, 506,000 served in World War II; 237,000 in Korea; 1 million in Vietnam; and 540,000 in the Persian Gulf (the data cover service from Aug. 2, 1990, to Sept. 30, 2004). See Table 513 at <<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/statistical-abstract.html>>.

Unless otherwise indicated, all the statements come from the *Americans with Disabilities: 2002* report at <[http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/aging\\_population/006809.html](http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/aging_population/006809.html)>.

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

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| African-American History Month (February)                | Labor Day (Sept. 4)                          |
| Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)                                | Grandparents Day (Sept. 10)                  |
| Women's History Month (March)                            | Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)   |
| Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/                   | Halloween (Oct. 31)                          |
| St. Patrick's Day (March 17)                             | American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month |
| Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)              | (November)                                   |
| Older Americans Month (May)                              | Veterans Day (Nov. 11)                       |
| Mother's Day (May 14)                                    | Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 23)                   |
| Father's Day (June 18)                                   | The Holiday Season (December)                |
| The Fourth of July (July 4)                              |  |
| Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26) |  |
| Back to School (August)                                  |  |

**Editor's note:** The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: (301) 763-3030; fax: (301) 457-3670; or e-mail: <[pio@census.gov](mailto:pio@census.gov)>.